

ORIGIN/ACTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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A-354
NO.

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TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Info : ASMARA

FROM : Amembassy ADDIS ABABA

SUBJECT: Evaluation of NIS Program

REF : CA-6275, December 7, 1962

Document No. HANDLING INDICATOR
Review of this document by CIA has
determined that

CIA has no objection to declass
it contains information of CIA
interest that must remain
classified at TS S C
Authority: HR 70-2

It contains nothing of CIA interest
Date 25 NOV 1980 Reviewer 059485

DATE: January 18, 1963

The Embassy wishes to offer the following comments on
the NIS program in response to the reference airgram:

(a) The Embassy has only limited use for NIS sections,
and anticipates no special situations that would increase use
of the NIS. NIS sections are most useful as briefing materials
before officers leave Washington for the post. Their bulkiness,
usually high classification, and relatively outdated
material greatly reduce the usefulness of NIS sections once
an officer has arrived at the post.

(b) NIS sections might be useful during an emergency
in an adjacent area, as a means of estimating military capabilities
and facilities for housing and transportation. Sections of NIS
treating such matters would be useful in the event of evacuation
from surrounding countries, or from this post to surrounding countries.

(c) The Embassy finds that normally more detail is
available in NIS sections than can readily be used. The amount
of detail reduces the usefulness of NIS sections as reference
material. The summary passages likewise contribute little to
ready reference, as it is selective detail rather than summary
statements that is needed.

(d) The Embassy (excluding ARMA and AIRA) finds the
political, economic and sociological sections more valuable
than the technical sections, which are of more use to the

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FORM 4-62 DS-323

Drafted by:

Comments and Classification Approved by:

Clearances:

Attache ARMA ATRA E/CON

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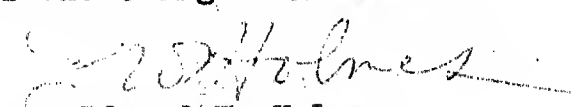
military attachés. [REDACTED] also uses various NIS sections extensively as background or basic intelligence. Nevertheless, usefulness of even these sections is very limited as pointed out above. The Chief limiting factor is that material is dated even by the time it reaches the post in draft form. Finished (printed) political and economic sections are even more out of date, the sociological section perhaps somewhat less so. Embassy officers have used extensively publications such as the Special Warfare Area Handbook for Ethiopia (October 1960) that compare most favorably with the NIS in organization, clarity and currency of data. The Special Warfare Handbook is divided into a large low-classification section (OUO) and a small highly classified (Secret) supplement. This division greatly facilitates use of the Handbook. If less elaborately prepared NIS sections, more selective in detail and of lower and more manageable classification, can be sent to the post before the material is a year or more out of date, their usefulness to the post would be considerably enhanced. The Embassy believes, however, that NIS sections will continue to be most useful to officers as pre-arrival briefing materials to be used in Washington.

(e) The Embassy has not received Chapter I (Brief) for this or surrounding areas.

(f) The Embassy does not see any special advantages in the coordinated interdepartmental NIS program.

AIRA and ARMA point out that NIS sections are useful in determining what information is already available in Washington on this and surrounding areas. To this extent NIS sections already prepared guide collection efforts for this country and especially for surrounding countries where military attachés have responsibility. AIRA regularly uses NIS sections for primary and secondary areas of interest.

For the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.


Edward W. Holmes
First Secretary of Embassy